

# Great British Guardians

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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## Policy Statement

*Great British Guardians* recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We maintain an attitude of “it could happen here” when safeguarding is concerned. We make every effort to ensure that students and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to talk if they are worried, believing they will be effectively listened to.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and host families with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure whilst they are in our care. The policy also informs parents, agents and partner schools how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care.

This policy is based on guidance from *KCSIE 2022* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*. It also makes use of guidance from the NSPCC website.

## Key Safeguarding Contact Details

Role	Name	T e l e p h o n e Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Stephen Arnott Hellscombe, Aldbourne, Marlborough, SN8 2JZ	07831 100843	<a href="mailto:stephen@gbguardians.com">stephen@gbguardians.com</a>
D e p u t y Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Kathy Arnott Hellscombe, Aldbourne, Marlborough, SN8 2JZ	07831 644419	<a href="mailto:kathy@gbguardians.com">kathy@gbguardians.com</a>
2 4 - H o u r emergency contact	Stephen Arnott	07831 100843	<a href="mailto:stephen@gbguardians.com">stephen@gbguardians.com</a>
LSP	Wiltshire Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN.	0300 456 0108 0300 456 0100 (Emergency Duty Service)	<a href="mailto:SVPP@wiltshire.gov.uk">SVPP@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>
LADO	Local Area Designated Officer.	0300 456 0108	<a href="mailto:dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk">dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk</a>

## Child Protection Principles

The following principles underpin our provisions and practices in relation to safeguarding and child protection:

- *Great British Guardians* will provide a safe and secure environment for all students;
- Host families and transfer companies provide a safe and secure environment for all students;
- All students feel safe, secure and protected from harm;
- All students know who to turn to for help, advice or support, can access services confidentially, quickly and easily and have access to 24-hour support;
- Stephen Arnott, Managing Director of *Great British Guardians*, has overall responsibility and accountability for the safeguarding and welfare of the students;

- All staff share in the responsibility to protect students from harm, remain vigilant in identifying safeguarding and child protection issues and to follow policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection;
- Students and staff have effective means by which they can raise child protection concerns or report issues;
- Staff have at least one reliable means to contact all students quickly and directly;
- Staff are aware of the medical or learning needs of individual students via the student record;
- In cases where the whereabouts of a student under *Great British Guardians* is not known or the student is believed to be at risk of harm, procedures to locate the student by the safest and quickest means possible, or secure the safety of the student will be invoked immediately by following the Missing Student policy;
- *Great British Guardians* has procedures in place that enable child protection concerns and incidents to be dealt with promptly and effectively and in line with relevant legislation.
- *Great British Guardians* will check in with all students on a regular basis to ensure their wellbeing.
- All staff and homestays are aware that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.
- Staff and Host Families will determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which, in turn, will facilitate communication.

*Great British Guardians* is committed to the protection of all children in its care. We are committed to safeguarding student welfare and undertake rigorous checks on all who work with us and we expect all staff, volunteers and host families to share this commitment.

Safeguarding students is the responsibility of us all, including full-time, part-time, contracted, agency and volunteer staff including those who do not have cause to come into direct or regular contact with students in order to carry out their daily duties. It also applies to those who provide host family accommodation for our students and third-party contractors.

The safety and welfare of children, or Child Protection, means protecting children from physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect where there is an identified risk. Safeguarding is the minimisation of the risk to children from all forms of child abuse including for example:

- child sexual exploitation
- radicalisation and extremism
- female genital mutilation
- physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect
- domestic abuse
- online abuse
- bullying and cyber bullying

We aim to always ensure that the students in our care experience a caring and secure environment in which they feel safe, respected and valued.

In pursuit of this aim, *Great British Guardians* undertakes the following:

1. Training is provided for all staff and host families to a level appropriate for their role (see training section below);
2. We promote an environment of trust, openness and clear communication between students, school and *Great British Guardians* staff and our Host families, so that student welfare, safety and pastoral care is recognised as the top priority;
3. We respond to any reported allegation or suspicion of child abuse in accordance with the *Great British Guardians* procedures as outlined below;
4. We ensure that all guardianship personnel, host families and personnel offering outsourced services who come into direct contact with students in our care, are recruited using safer recruitment practices and are formally screened through the completion of an enhanced DBS check;
5. We maintain links with the appropriate agencies who have a statutory responsibility to deal with child welfare and child protection concerns. If you have any reason to believe that a child in your care is suffering from any form of abuse or neglect then please report it immediately in confidence to the DSL or DDSL using the contact details listed in this policy.

## Supporting procedures

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Anti-bullying and (including cyber-bullying) Policy
- Anti-Radicalisation Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Missing Student Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff and Host family Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Emergency procedure (This includes information on the guardianship organisation's approach to foreseeable emergencies, such as a pandemic.)

## Definitions

Term	What this means
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	<p>is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;</li> <li>ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;</li> <li>taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.</li> </ul>
Child Protection	Is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)	This is the person identified as taking the lead in safeguarding matters in an organisation. This person (and possibly a deputy) will be trained to a higher level.
Prevent	Prevent is the name given to part of the government's strategy to prevent terrorism by reducing the possibility of radicalisation.
LSP (Local Safeguarding Partnership)	Formerly Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and consisting of the local authority, the clinical commissioning group within the local authority and the chief office of police within the local authority.
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is to coordinate all allegations and concerns made against a person who works with children.
Children	'Children' includes everyone under the age of 18.

## What is abuse and neglect?

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. All staff and host families should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection. If staff or host families are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL (or DDSL).

All staff and host families should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another

**Contextual Safeguarding:** All staff, volunteers and host families should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the guardianship organisation, school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

## Types of abuse and neglect

*Taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.*

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used

to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

*For specific types of abuse, please see the additional information at the end of this policy.*

## Signs of Abuse and Neglect

The following information has been taken from the NSPCC website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

### Common signs

The NSPCC list the following as common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but we can help you to assess the situation.

You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety and wellbeing.

### Indicators of Physical Abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include:



- bruises
- broken or fractured bones
- burns or scalds
- bite marks

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- scarring
- the effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it's important to be aware of these. Visible signs include:

- swelling
- bruising
- fractures
- being extremely sleepy or unconscious
- breathing problems
- seizures
- vomiting
- unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly

## Indicators of Emotional Abuse

There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point'. That's why it's important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- seem unconfident or lack self-assurance
- struggle to control their emotions
- have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- act in a way that's inappropriate for their age

The signs of emotional abuse can also be different for children at different ages. Children might:

- use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- act in a way or know about things you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- struggle to control their emotions
- have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills
- have few or no friends.

## Indicators of Sexual Abuse

Knowing the signs of sexual abuse can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong or they might be scared to speak out. Some of the signs you might notice include:

### Emotional and Behavioural signs

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Self-harm
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem

### Physical Signs

- Bruises
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet
- Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse

## Indicators of Neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

### Poor appearance and hygiene

- being smelly or dirty
- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter

### Health and development problems

- anaemia
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- medical or dental issues
- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines

- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections
- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues

#### **Housing and family issues**

- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members

#### **Change in behaviour**

- becoming clingy
- becoming aggressive
- being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- changes in eating habits
- displaying obsessive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- missing school
- showing signs of self-harm
- using drugs or alcohol

## **Procedures**

When new staff, volunteers or host families join our organisation, they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the DSL (and DDSL) and how to share concerns with them. Please note that the usual reporting channel is via the DSL, however anyone can make a referral direct to the LSP or LADO. The contact details are included in this document.

### **Actions to be followed if there are concerns about a child or young person**

- All staff members and host families have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or host families who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the DSL (or, in their absence, the DDSL).
- Where there is risk of immediate harm, concerns will be referred immediately by telephone to the LSP (see contact details above) or the Police.
- Less urgent concerns or requests for support, including for Early Help, will be sent by the DSL to the LSP (see contact details above).
- The DSL may also seek advice from Social Care or another appropriate agency about a concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it.

- The DSL will refer any safeguarding concerns that relate to an incident in school to the school. Concerns will be referred to the school DSL. If an allegation is made against a member of school staff, the guardianship organisation will check the school policy to see who to refer such matters to. This is usually the Head of the School. If the allegation involves the Head, then usually the chair of governors should be informed.
- Where a concern is not seen to reach the threshold for a referral, the DSL will keep the concern on file and will monitor the situation. Should the concern escalate, a referral will be made to the LSP.
- Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the LSP and/or Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.
- If a member of staff or host family continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member or host family concerned should press for re-consideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If, for any reason, the DSL (or DDSL) is not available, or you do not feel that your concern is being taken seriously, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Any individual may refer to the LSP or Police where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child. The contact details are included at the beginning of this policy.
- Full records of reports and action taken will be maintained by the DSL and securely stored in a specific safeguarding file.

### Allegations of abuse against a member of staff or host family

- This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working, volunteering or hosting students for *Great British Guardians* has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
  - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (transferable risk).
- In the event that there is an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or host family, *Great British Guardians* will follow the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020* Part 4.
- Allegations against a member of guardianship organisation staff, volunteers or host families should be directed to Stephen Arnott who must contact the LADO immediately and follow their advice. They **must not** investigate themselves. If the allegation is about Stephen Arnott, please contact AEGIS (tel: +44 (0)1453 821293) who will contact the LADO and follow the advice as above. Alternatively, the allegation can be reported directly to the LADO.
- *Great British Guardians* will report promptly to the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) any person whose services are no longer used for regulated activity because they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child.
- Any historical allegations should be referred to the police.
- Low level concerns: The safety and wellbeing of students in our care is dependent on the vigilance of all our staff, volunteers and host families and their prompt communication to Stephen Arnott of any concerns, no matter how small, about any conduct by an adult which causes you to doubt that

adult's suitability to work with or have access to children. *Great British Guardians* is conscious of its duty of care to students and will always act, including if alerted to the possibility of abuse arising from situations or persons outside our care. The notification and prompt handling of all concerns about adults is fundamental to safeguarding students. It helps to identify and prevent abuse and to protect adults against misunderstandings or misinterpretations. It also encourages openness, trust and transparency and it clarifies expected behaviours. Please refer to our low-level concerns policy for further details.

### How to receive a disclosure from a child or young person

- Reassure the child and listen carefully – it is important that they know you believe them.
- Do not say you will not say anything to anyone – in fact you have a duty to disclose this to another person so do not promise confidentiality.
- Make sure you take detailed notes, write everything down.
- Ask open questions if appropriate, do not lead the conversation to find out what has happened. Use words such as tell me, explain or describe, and allow the student to speak.
- Avoid words such as what, why, how when – these will be asked by the relevant agency if appropriate.
- Ensure that you notify the police by calling 999 if you believe that the young person is at immediate or serious risk of harm.
- Contact the DSL (Stephen Arnott) or DDSL (Kathy Arnott) as soon as practicable and in any case within 24 hours.
- If the disclosure is made out of hours, please use the emergency phone number, 07831 100843.

### Sharing Safeguarding Information

Information will be shared with guardianship organisation staff, host families and the school's DSL (of the school that the student attends) who 'need to know'.

All staff and host families must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and that the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations are not a barrier to sharing information where a failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm. There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection.

All staff and host families must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. However, staff and host families are aware that matters relating to child protection and safeguarding are personal to children and families, in this respect they are confidential and the DSL and DDSL will only disclose information about a child to other members of guardianship organisation staff, host families or the DSL of the school that the student attends on a need to know basis.

The DSL will always undertake to gain parent/carers consent to refer a child to Social Care unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

### Role of DSL and DDSL

The DSL will take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). This will be explicit in the role holder's job description. This person should have the appropriate status and authority within the guardianship organisation to carry out the duties of the post.

The DDSL will be trained to the same standard as the DSL and the role will be explicit in their job description.

### The designated safeguarding lead is expected to:

- refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- support staff and host families who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- support staff and host families who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required;
- act as a point of contact with the three safeguarding partners;
- liaise with staff and host families on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies;
- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff and host families.
- ensure the guardianship organisation's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- ensure the child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly;
- ensure the child protection policy is available for all relevant parties;
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff and host families are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements.

## Prevent

*Great British Guardians* has a separate policy that outlines our procedure for Anti-Radicalisation and Prevent. This can be found on our website.

### Prevent Lead Contact Details

Role	Name	Telephone Number	Email
Prevent Lead	Stephen Arnott	07831 100843	stephen@gbguardians.com

## Record keeping

*Great British Guardians* will keep full records of any safeguarding concern reported to them. Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately to the general student files. These will be stored confidentially by the DSL in either a locked cabinet (hard copies) or a password protected file. Only the DSL and DDSL will have access to these files.

Records will be detailed and accurate (either handwritten or using appropriate secure online software). These will include all concerns about a student even if there is no need to make an immediate referral and record the rationale for decisions made and action taken. Copies of any correspondence or notes from conversations with the LSP, school DSL or other external agency will be included in the file.

*Great British Guardians* will ensure that the indication of the existence of the additional child protection file is marked on the student file record. Information will only be shared in a need to know basis in order to safeguard the student,

## Training and updates

*Great British Guardians* will ensure that all staff and host families receive training and regular updates that is suitable for their roles. A formal record of all safeguarding training will be kept.

## DSL and DDSL

The DSL and DDSL will attend suitable face-to-face training as approved or provided by the Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP), AEGIS or the NSPCC. This training will be renewed every two years.

## Other staff and host families

All other members of staff, volunteers and Host families will receive appropriate safeguarding training to an appropriate basic awareness level (previously referred to as level 1), every three years. This will either be done online or in person. Members of staff, volunteers and Host families who have already completed suitable safeguarding training for another provider that is still in date will not be required to re-train. In this case the DSL will still need to ensure that the person fully understands *Great British Guardians* own procedures for safeguarding.

All staff and host families will receive regular safeguarding updates, at least once per year – normally in September. These will be given by the DSL.

## Whistleblowing

*Great British Guardians* has a separate policy that outlines the whistleblowing procedures. These protect staff members who report colleagues they believe are doing something wrong or illegal, or who are neglecting their duties.

## Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs)

*Great British Guardians* will liaise with their Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) and work in partnership with other agencies in line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

Partner schools have their own safeguarding policies. These can be found on their website and will include the contact details for their LSP. *Great British Guardians* recognises that if any safeguarding concerns occurred whilst a student was in a host family that was out of the schools county then a different/additional LSP arrangement would be required as well. In this case, *Great British Guardians* will contact the relevant LSP and follow their procedures. Details can be found on the Local Authority website. The website below provides a link to all of the LSPs in the country:

<https://www.safecic.co.uk/your-scb-acpc/55-free-downloads-and-safeguarding-links/61-safeguarding-children-board-links>

In the event of any contact information difficulties then *Great British Guardians* should call the police as they are one of the partners.

*Great British Guardians* is aware of how to access local agency contacts; this includes Local Safeguarding Partnerships across the country and how to access locally agreed inter-agency procedures and guidance. In addition, *Great British Guardians* is aware of the non-emergency reporting procedures via the Local Authority's Children's Services relevant to the area or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or by telephoning the non-emergency Police number 101. For emergency situations, *Great British Guardians* is aware of the need to contact the relevant police force for the area by dialling 999, this includes in Wales and Police Scotland.

*Great British Guardians* is aware that in **Scotland**, for a non-emergency referral or concern they can contact the local children's social work team. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in. Alternatively they can contact the local office of Scottish Children's Reporter Administration: <https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/>

*Great British Guardians* is aware that in **Wales** for a non-emergency referral or concern they can contact the local child protection services. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in, and on the table below.



## Liaison with parents/ agents and partner schools

- *Great British Guardians* may be required to share confidential safeguarding information with the DSL of the school or college that the student attends. When a student moves school or college, safeguarding information may be shared with the DSL of the new school. All schools and colleges have their own safeguarding and child protection policies that outline their procedures. These can be found on their websites.
- UK Government guidance emphasises that information sharing is essential for the effective safeguarding of students, and that “the *GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018* do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe” (*Information Sharing, Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents or carers, July 2018*). The school may therefore share personal or sensitive information about a student with the nominated guardian, where this is deemed to be vital for the health, welfare and/or safeguarding of the child in question. Keeping the guardian updated about any changes to a student’s circumstances helps to ensure appropriate arrangements are made.
- Whilst *Great British Guardians* will work openly with parents as far as possible, it reserves the right to contact the LSP or the police, without notifying parents if this is believed to be in the child’s best interests.
- *Great British Guardians* will not usually share safeguarding information with agents unless it is necessary to safeguard the student. In this case information will be provided on a need-to-know basis and on the understanding that it should be kept strictly confidential.

## Further Detail on specific types of abuse

The following information is taken from *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2020). Please refer to this document for further details, including additional types of abuse . [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/912592/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_Sep\\_2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf)

## Safeguarding issues

All staff and host families should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

## Peer on peer/ child on child abuse

All staff and host families should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- abuse within intimate partner relationships;
- bullying (including cyberbullying);
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and



- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

## Serious violence

All staff and host families should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## Children missing from education

All staff and host families should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should contact the students' school or college should they suspect a student is missing from education. The school or college will have a procedure for reporting this absence.

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online. More information, including definitions and indicators, is provided below.

## Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

## Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media). The above CCE indicators can also be indicators of CSE, as can:

- children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.

## County lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of "deal line".

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move and store drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the National Referral Mechanism should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

## Honour-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)

So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage) (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

### Actions

If staff have a concern regarding a child that might be at risk of HBA or who has suffered from HBA, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). As appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. In schools, where FGM has taken place, since 31 October 2015 there has been a mandatory reporting duty placed on teachers – if a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

## FGM

Comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

## Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage. Schools and colleges can play an important role in safeguarding children from forced marriage.

## Domestic Abuse

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

## Upskirting

The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Upskirting Act, came into force on 12 April 2019. 'Upskirting' is where someone takes a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission and or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

## Online safety

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- **content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- **contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- **conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

*Great British Guardians* recognises the risks posed to students online. Further information can be found in the online safety policy & anti-bullying (including cyber-bullying) policy.

## Mental Health

All staff and host families should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff and host families however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff and host families are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff or host families have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

There may be instances where *Great British Guardians* is asked to remove a student with mental health issues from a school setting. Should this be the case, *Great British Guardians* will work together with the school to support the student in the best way possible.

In the event of the removal of a student with a mental health issue, *Great British Guardians* will ask the member of school staff to complete and return the Student Removal Form, before removing the student from the school setting. This will ensure that *Great British Guardians* has enough information about the circumstances leading up to the removal of the student in order to support the student appropriately, and to ensure all appropriate steps have been taken up to that point.

## Review

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 01 March 2023.

Signed by Stephen Arnott.



Date: 01 March 2023



## Appendix 1: Incident Form

### CHILD PROTECTION RECORD – Report of a Concern

Date of record:			
Date of incident:			
Name of referrer:		Role of referrer:	
Student name:			
Details of concern:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>use initials for other children / young people involved, unless there is a specific need to name them in full</i></li> <li>• <i>contemporaneous notes, if taken, may be attached to this form</i></li> </ul>		
Reported to:		Role of person reported to:	
Signed:			

For DSL use:

Action taken:		Advice sought:  <i>(from whom and what was advice given)</i>	
Concern / referral discussed with parent / carer?		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, note discussion with parent</i>	
Referral made:		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, record to whom and any action agreed</i>	
Feedback to referring member of staff or host family:			<i>By whom</i>
Response to / action taken with student:			<i>By whom</i>
Name and contact number of key workers:			
Name and contact details of GP:			
Other notes / information / concerns:  Any other action required:			